

## The Marauders Map Beginning

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## The Marauders Map Beginning

### CHAPTER 1: A HAIR-RAISING DISCOVERY

>Severus Snape sat awake in the dormitory, staring at the brooding walls. All around him fellow Slytherins dozed quietly, all thinking their separate thoughts. Snape settled down again bitterly. He was thinking about today's Quidditch match. The excitement of Slytherin leading by fifty points, and their Seeker about to close his hands on the Golden Snitch and seal the match, Quidditch Cup and the House Championship. The one factor that irked Snape so very much had come like an avenging angel and stolen the Snitch, along with Slytherin's glory. <br>

>Potter. <br>

>That Gryffindor scum had been swamped by his companions, including his closest one, Sirius Black. Then Lupin had joined them. Of course, the little fat one, Pettigrew had to be somewhere, waddling along.

<br>

>Snape hated them all. He hated them with a passion that coursed through him on occasions like this. But there was nothing he could do about it. <br>

>Wait... <br>

>There was something. <br>

>Snape remembered something on the lawns, a couple of months ago.

<br>

>He had been around the castle at night, breaking rules, but the Slytherin master would get him out of that. He saw a shaggy figure crossing the lawn, shepherded by two figures. It was screaming in pain. Something about the shape of the body, contorted through it was, reminded Snape of a figure he saw always, with that darned Potter. <br>

>Lupin. <br>

>He couldn't place his finger on it, but he knew it was something.

<br>

>Snape settled back down among his fellow second years. <br>

>Someday.... <br>  
><br>"James! James, wake up!"  
><br>James Potter groaned in his sleep. Someone was shaking him, shaking him hard. He scrabbled for his glasses on the table.  
  
><br>"What's up?" he muttered, squinting at the figure standing over him through sleepy eyes. It was Sirius. James sat up.  
><br>"Remus has gone again."  
><br>Suddenly James was wide awake.  
><br>"Again. But he's been to two grandmother's funerals, various family reunions and his parents have been seriously ill twice! What is it?"  
><br>Sirius shook his head.  
><br>"I don't know. But listen!" Sirius's voice had an air of excitement about it "He's only just gone. It was the creak of the portrait that alerted me. We could follow him!"  
><br>James felt excited too. Remus Lupin, their close friend, had been constantly missing every month or so. They were near to discovering the secret. He reached under his bed. Something silver and fluid moved through his fingers.  
><br>"Come on." James threw the garment around them. The mirror across the hall grunted. It had seen the same thing happen many times before. Then, two figures stood. Then, a swish of cloth and there was no reflection. Seconds later the portrait swung closed. The full moon shone in through the windows.  
> <br>  
>Albus Dumbledore stood waiting at the front gate, as he had done for months past. This was a routine to him now. Sometimes he would ask himself if it was all worth it. But to one as gifted as the child, he always told himself it was. <br>Madam Pomfrey hurried along the corridor towards him, a figure alongside her.  
><br>"Alright there Poppy? No problems?"  
><br>"No, but I'm sure just as I was leaving someone woke up."  
  
><br>Dumbledore nodded sagely.  
><br>"James or Sirius I expect."  
><br>"They're no fools Albus! They'll find out."  
><br>"James and Sirius? With minds like those two, I expect they will, sooner or later, sooner or later."  
><br>Dumbledore then turned to the figure huddled down under a cloak.  
  
><br>"How are you doing there Remus?"  
><br>A face, shivering, peered up towards him. Dumbledore noticed the lengthening of the hair.  
><br>"Fine, thank you, sir."  
><br>The boy was obviously not fine. Small convulsions were rippling through him. Dumbledore hoisted the lad.  
><br>"Come on Poppy. Let's get moving."  
><br>Remus staggered to his feet. The three figures moved quickly out into the moonlight. Remus Lupin started to shake more violently now. Hair crept down his neck and arms, and small white tips were beginning to poke out from under his top lip. Dumbledore stepped up the pace. Then, suddenly he glanced towards the main door. No one was there. Dumbledore shook his head. They had nearly reached a tree, standing alone in the grounds. Strangely, its branches were thrashing about. One branch, Dumbledore noted, was still stained red. He shook his head again.  
><br>"Poor Davey. Just a first year and already he has lost an eye."

><br>He sighed and muttered something under his breath. Suddenly the tree stopped its thrashing and froze. But it was too late. Remus started thrashing instead, wrenching himself from their grips and falling to the ground. His clothes tore and his nose lengthened. A long growl broke from his lips. Mrs Pomfrey screamed aloud. But Dumbledore as always, remained calm. He pulled his wand free and muttered something. Lupin, barely recognisable now, fell still.

><br>"Put him down the hole Poppy."

><br>A few beads of sweat broke Dumbledores forehead.

><br>"NOW, Poppy. I cannot hold him for long."

><br>The nurse, still mute with terror, nodded and quickly pulled the hairy thing into the tunnel under the tree. She stepped back. Dumbledore, now drenched with sweat, stepped backwards and lowered his wand. The tree resumed its violent thrashing and Dumbledore relaxed. Mopping his forehead, he glanced upwards at a wooden shack standing alone on a hill not far away. Suddenly a howl rose from it. Dumbledore again glanced round at the door, and this time he smiled.

><br>"Sooner, I think. Yes, sooner rather than later." He said chuckling to himself.

><br>\*\*\*

><br>Three days later, Remus Lupin reappeared at the breakfast table, looking worn and white, as he always did after his little 'breaks'.

>James and Sirius exchanged glances. Peter, oblivious, tucked in heartily to a massive mound of bacon. Remus slid into a empty space they created between them. <br>

>"So, Remus, what illness did your parents have this time?" said Sirius, in an innocent voice. <br>

>"What? Oh, um, they weren't ill this time. Just a little family crisis." <br>

>"Of course. These crises can be so worrying Remus." said James, in the same voice. <br>

>"What? Oh, yes, yes, I suppose they can." <br>

>Sirius suddenly glanced at the ceiling. <br>

>"Oh look, Remus. You can still see the moon. Is it full?" <br>

>"No." Said Remus, without glancing up. "It's on the first stage of its wane and won't be full again for another thirty-three days." He said all this in a knowledgeable kind of way. Then he choked on a piece of bacon. He looked up at his friends, who were looking intently at him. <br>

>"I...I...I listen very carefully in Astrology. Very interesting, the night sky. Did you know..." Lupin began. <br>

>James lent forward and cut in. <br>

>"Did you know we haven't done stages of the moon yet in Astrology Remus?" <br>

>"Really? Um... Well, must have heard it of my father at the crisis. Very keen astrologer." <br>

>"Last time I saw your father Remus," said Sirius "I remarked to him about the brightness of the stars. To which he replied, and I quote, 'There all the same aren't they? Leave those darn astrologers to look at them'." <br>

>Remus Lupin suddenly went quiet. <br>

>"Come with us Remus. We want to have a chat to you." <br>Remus nodded miserably. All three of them got up and left the room. Peter Pettigrew, looking up from his bacon for the first time, exclaimed

><br>"Hey!"

><br>Then he looked down at his food.

><br>" I suppose I'll see you in Potions then." And he resumed eating.

> <br>

>CHAPTER 2: LUNAR INSPIRATION <br>

><br>Remus Lupin trudged dejectedly along Hogwart's sullen corridors, flanked by his two closest friends, who kept glancing at each other over his shoulder. They reached the Gryffindor common room.

><br>" Pheonix." Muttered Harry. The Fat Lady swung open to admit them. They marched up the stone stairs to the empty dormitory, still in silence.

><br>" Sit down Remus." Said James, gesturing to a bed.

>Lupin sat down. <br>

>" We'll miss Potions!" he said feebly. <br>

>" Never mind. Now Remus is there anything you want to tell us?" said James. <br>

>" No?" said Remus, but he was unable to look into James eyes.

<br>James glanced at Sirius, who stepped up to talk. Sirius had always been more blunt than James.

><br>" We know you're a werewolf, so tell us everything NOW!"

><br>Remus looked up fearfully into Sirius face. A vein was throbbing at his temple.

><br>" W-what? A werewolf-me?" tried Remus.

>Sirius had a very short temper. He grabbed Lupin and thrust his face close to his friends. <br>

>" You're always gone at the full moon. In Defence Against the Ark Arts last month, your Boggart turned into what Lily thought was a crystal ball. It was a MOON, wasn't it Remus? You're scared of the moon. Either you don't like moonlight, and that I doubt or you seriously need a haircut around the full moon." <br>Sirius let go of Remus, who fell back onto the bed. Silence followed for several minutes. Then Remus let out a huge sigh.

><br>" Okay. Yes, you're right. I've been a werewolf for a while now. For a while I didn't think Hogwarts would accept me. Then Dumbledore himself came to our house. He talked it over with my parents and they agreed. Dumbledore planted the Whomping Willow over the tunnel. It leads to the shack on the hill. No-one can get in, no-one can get out while the willow is active."

><br>James let out a gasp.

><br>" Not the Shrieking Shack? Everyone in Hogsmeade says its haunted. Hideous noises come from it. Even the Bloody Baron won't go near it!"

>Remus sat up enough to give James a glare. <br>

>" Those noises are me! Can't you see that?" <br>James looked muted for a while. Then Sirius leant forward.

><br>" Right. I get the fact that you're a werewolf, but what I don't get is the fact that you hid it from James and I. We're your closest friends, for Gods sake Remus!"

>Remus hung his head. <br>

>" I wanted to tell you, but Dumbledore forbade it. Imagine if it leaked out. Parents would be pouring into the school to take their children away. Dumbledore will be sacked as Hogwarts Headmaster. This school's reputation would be gone." <br>He looked up for comfort, but their faces could have etched steel.

><br>" You don't know how hard its been, not telling you two. Making up one feeble excuse after another, each one weaker than the last."

>James face softened. Remus was bowed, holding his face in his hands.

<br>

>" Remus? Remus, I don't care. I'm friends with you whatever." <br>

>" Yeah. Me too." Echoed Sirius. <br>

>They stood in silence for a while before the mirror in the corner shrieked aloud. <br>

>" YOU'LL MISS TRANSFIGURATION AS WELL AS POTIONS IF YOU DON'T GET A MOVE ON!" <br>They laughed briefly and moved as one towards the door. They opened it to find a pretty second year girl walked up the stairs towards them.

><br>" Hi Lily." Said Sirius. " What are you doing here?"

>The girl with bright green eyes and dark red hair smiled at James. <br>

>" Hi Sirius, Remus, James. What's going on? I was just nipping back to the dorm for my wand when I heard someone shout ' NOW' and I came up to see if anything was wrong." <br>

>"Um...Well, we were asking Remus here when Transfiguration was and he shouted 'now.'" Said James with desperate glances at the others. They nodded quickly. <br>

>" Now we've got to be getting along. So, we're off to Transfiguration." Said Sirius, leading the other two down the stairs quickly. <br>

>" Oh good!" said Lily." I'll come with you." <br>

>They glanced at each other. Oh no! They wouldn't be able to talk able what to do next! So, they trudged off to Transfiguration while Lily chatted on about the Transfiguration teacher that had started the year they entered Hogwarts (Professor McGonagall) and the way that she really enjoyed Charms more than Transfiguration.

<br>Eventually they reached the classroom. James groaned as he saw who was just about enter the room.

><br>" Potter. Oh look, it's his lapdogs, Black and Lupin. Where's the little fat one?" said

><br>Severus Snape, his hooked nose gleaming. His two friends sniggered.

><br>" Why you..." snarled Sirius. " Peter's much better than you."

><br>James grabbed Sirius by the arm.

><br>" Leave it Sirius." Glancing contemptuously at Snape, James walked into the room, tugging Sirius. Remus snarled at Snape, and even the cold Slytherin was shocked at the animal aggression behind it. Then Remus stepped into the room, followed by Lily. Lily slipped into a chair next to James and Sirius. McGonagall glared at Snape as he swaggered into the room and sat down on a chair.

><br>" Right class." Said the young teacher. She inclined her head towards Snape. " As your father has kindly pointed out to the governing board, Snape, that my lessons aren't moving fast enough, I have decided to move on to something even you, Snape, will find challenging."

> <br>

>Professor McGonagall walked into the space in front of the desk. They all stared at her. Every lesson McGonagall would do an exciting transfiguration to whet their appetites for work. She waited for silence to fall and then, without a sound, changing into a ginger cat. It even had spectacle marks around its eyes. The class burst into massive applause. Well, the Gryffindor half did. Slytherin just slouched in their chairs. Snape even yawned. McGonagall changed back as suddenly as she had gone. <br>

>" Now, Mr Snape, do you think you can tell me what I did?" <br>

>Snape leant back in his chair. <br>

>" Bored me?" Slytherin sniggered behind their hands. <br>

>McGonagall smiled primly. <br>

>" Very funny Mr Snape. Report to Sick Bay at lunch for detention and five points from Slytherin. Anyone else?" she said efficiently. <br>

>James almost laughed aloud. <br>

>" Look at him!" he chuckled, nudging Sirius." It looks as if he's just eaten a lemon marinated in vinegar!" <br>

>McGonagall noted James whispering. <br>

>" Mr Potter? Have you any idea what I did? Or were you and Mr Black discussing how much you would like to join Mr Snape in scrubbing bedpans?" <br>

>James groaned. <br>

>" Erm..." Harry twiddled his thumbs, looking around at the walls. He felt himself blushing. <br>Suddenly he felt a nudge in his side. Lily, staring straight ahead, indicated to his desk. James looked down briefly. On a scrap of paper, in Lily's tidy handwriting, was written:

><br>She's an Animagus.

><br>James grinned and glanced up again. He coughed in a professional way and leant back.

><br>" Well Professor, I would have to say you are a very gifted Animagus."

><br>McGonagall raised her thin eyebrows, while giving Lily a piercing stare. Her expression softened a little.

><br>" Well done Mr Potter. Five points to Gryffindor. Now, the transaction from human to Animagi is a complex and testing procedure." She turned and began to write a long set of notes on the blackboard. James waited until she was writing soundly before leaning over.

><br>" Thanks. I know what it's like to be at the receiving end of McGonagall's fury!"

><br>Lily smiled coyly at him. James leant back quickly, feeling his blush coming on. He shook himself and concentrated on the lesson.

><br>" Animagi are very powerful wizards." McGonagall was saying. " Only the gifted can do the spell. All Animagi must be registered, and a constant check is kept by the Ministry of Magic." With that she resumed her endless notes. At last the end of the lesson arrived. Sirius, Remus, and Lily got up, a bored look on their faces. James stayed sat down, an interested look on his face. Something McGonagall had said, something about Animagi having a sort of influence over wild creatures...

><br>" James, come on!" yelled Sirius from the corridor. " We've a break before Charms and I want to talk to you about something." Sirius indicated his head in the direction of Remus. James nodded, his train of thought gone, and gathered up his books. He was heading towards the door when Peter Pettigrew caught up with him.

><br>" Oh, hello there Peter." Said James absentmindedly, heading towards the Gryffindor common room. The chubby boy, waddling along, panting to keep up with James's long strides.

><br>" Hi James!" he squeaked."Wow, wasn't that interesting! I'd love to become an Animagus. What animal do you think I'd become? McGonagall says they reflect your nature. I'd be a bear or a lion, don't you think James?"

><br>" Mmm." Said James distantly. " Um, I've got to be somewhere Peter. I'll see you in Potions."

><br>With that James picked up his step and left the unfit Peter in his wake.

> <br>

>Weeks passed. Sirius and James studied werewolves in their spare time, but access to the books was restricted unless in Defence Against the Dark Arts lessons. Remus went once more to the Shrieking Shack and again Sirius and James followed, under the protection of the Invisibility Cloak. They watched as Madam Pomfrey escorted him across the lawn, without any premature changes this time, into the Whomping Willows tunnel. A few minutes later she emerged and a piercing howl rose from the shack. James shivered under the cloak, and he didn't think it had anything to do with the cold. <br>It was Thursday the next day and the first lesson up was Defence Against the Dark Arts. James hated this lesson, as Professor Spiney's lessons were a joke. The little man huddled behind his desk, and avoided all mention of banshees. Rumours went around that Spiney had once had a nasty encounter in India with one of the monsters. Today Spiney cleared his throat and squeaked.

><br>"Hello class. Today I have something special for you."

><br>He unfurled a huge poster. It was a chart of the phases of the moon, with a massive picture of a full one in the centre. James glanced nervously at Remus, who had whimpered and shrunk behind his massive pile of books.

><br>"Can anyone guess what today's lesson is about, class?"

><br>James cleared his throat hesitantly.

><br>"Er..werewolves, Professor?"

><br>"Excellent! Take two points for Ravenclaw!" he exclaimed.

><br>"Er, Professor? I'm in Gryffindor!"

><br>"What? Well, they can have two points as well. Now, on with the lesson."

>Throughout the lesson Remus Lupin shrunk further and further behind his books, while Sirius and James lapped it all in, eager to help their friend in any way possible. <br>Fifty minutes had gone by before Spiney said something that jolted Harry's memory.

><br>"And that werewolf was gone! Oh, also, werewolves are rumoured to be extremely violent. That isn't true in every case. Werewolves are only violent towards humans. Other animals are perfectly safe in their company. Hah, I remember reading about a case in 1864 where a berserk werewolf slaughtered ten people only to be stopped by a pet cat, whom the werewolf befriended immediately. Imagine that!"

><br>The bell rang shrilly.

><br>"Homework : An essay on the reaction of werewolves to the moon. In great detail please!" Spiney squeaked.

>Sirius stretched and started to pack his books away. Remus had already scooped his books away and had scurried away. Sirius shook his head. <br>

>"Poor Remus. Just after the full moon and he gets that." He stood up, ready to travel to Herbology. James hadn't moved for the last minute or so, his eyes focused on the blackboard and his lips moving, as if checking the notes. Sirius waved a hand in front of his friends eyes. <br>

>"Hello? Anyone at home? James? JAMES!" <br>

>Sirius' yell snapped James out of his reverie. <br>

>"What? Oh yes, Herbology." James made to get up, and then remembered was his train of thought had been on. <br>

>"Forget it. Sit down!" James' voice was crisp and sharp, so Sirius obeyed instantly. James leaned forward. <br>

>"I knew McGonagall's lesson meant something. Just now, it confirmed it." <br>

>Sirius looked perplexed. <br>  
>" What? You're talking no sense." <br>  
>James span round. <br>  
>" If we can't cure Remus, we can join him." <br>  
>Sirius let out of bellow of laughter. <br>  
>" Ho! That's a good one! Now I know you're mental. We'd be ripped to shreds!" <br>  
>James shook his head hard. <br>  
>" No, no, you're not listening properly. Not as humans, but as animals!" <br>  
>Sirius looked as if he was going to say something sarcastic again, but he stopped. <br>  
>" What, as Animagi?" <br>  
>" Why not?" questioned James. " Remus wouldn't be aggressive, we could do it." <br>Sirius grinned.  
><br>" No, no, no, you've forgotten several important details. The charm is incredibly complex. The book on how to perform the charm is in the Restricted Section. We're under age and we're unlicensed."  
  
><br>" We use the Invisibility Cloak! No-one would know. And you just have to glance at our test marks. Well, we're brilliant!"  
><br>The same gleam in James' eyes was in Sirius' too.  
><br>" We could do it. Peter would need help, but that's no problem."  
  
><br>They sat there, in stunned silence, for a couple of minutes.  
  
><br>" It would take time." Said Sirius.  
><br>" Several years would be my estimate." Replied James. " But we have the time, we have the will and we have the resources."  
  
><br>They grinned happily at each other.  
><br>" We will be Animagi."  
>CHAPTER 3: ANIMAGI <br>  
><br>The months flew by for Remus, James, Sirius and Peter. Yes, Peter had eventually been included on the little secret too. He was also a good and loyal friend, and agreed to work with his friends to become Animagi. James and Sirius were excelling in lessons and Gryffindor were winning the House Championship. Everything was going great for the four. All the time their relentless drive to become Animagi had powered them. Today, three months after their decision, James and Sirius were discussing quietly at the table.  
><br>" All the books in the main Library have been used," Sirius was saying. " We must go into the Restricted Section."  
><br>But James was having second thoughts.  
><br>" We don't know if the book's even there. The last time anyone used it was McGonagall about six years ago. Also, we don't know the name of the book."  
><br>Sirius grinned that annoyingly knowing smile.  
><br>" Yes we do. I had a quick peek in McGonagalls files. Animagi: A Study. Yes, it's still there. But I don't know where. A good nights searching is what's called for!"  
>James nodded. <br>  
>" How do you always manage to win?" he grumbled, getting up from the breakfast table. They nodded to Remus and he immediately followed them. <br>  
>" BLACK! LUPIN! POTTER! COME HERE NOW!" <br>  
>A voice bellowed from the doorway. It was Professor Fange, Head of Slytherin House. <br>  
>" Uh-oh." Muttered James. " Do you reckon he found out it was us who bewitched Spiney's chalk to only write ' Slytherin are scum?' ." <br>

> " Can't of done. Only Lily knows apart from us three." Whispered Remus back. " We told her outside in the corridor." <br>

> " Unless," growled Sirius, his temper obviously building up " Someone overheard and told Fange." <br>

> As one they turn to face Slytherin table. Their suspicions were confirmed. Snape was rolling about in his chair with mirth. Remus' top lip curled up and a low growl came out. <br>

> " NOW, YOU THREE. OR I'LL DOUBLE YOUR PUNISHMENT!" <br>

> Fange was swelling red with rage. They reached him, heads bowed, and hurried out into the corridor. Fange swung the doors shut. <br>

> " Now. I think you know what I'm accusing you off. Insulting fellow houses is a grave offence. I have an eyewitness account that tells of you confessing your crime to your close friend Lily." <br>

> " Snape." Snarled Sirius. <br>

> " Who it was is none of your business Black." Fange spat the work ' Black' as if it was sour. <br>

> " You three will report to Madam Pomfreys sickbay for bedpan cleaning." Fange leered down at them. <br>

> " Have a good day." Fange swaggered off and into breakfast. <br>

> " Git." Said Sirius. " I'd like to break his scrawny neck." <br>

> James gave a snort of laughter as they walked away. <br>

> " Then there's a nice comfortable cell in Azkaban waiting for you." <br>

> " That's rich." Said Sirius. " I'd rather die than go to Azkaban." <br>

> The three walked on in silence. Then Remus stopped suddenly. <br>

> " The library is closing tomorrow for two months for re-arranging. We need to get the book tonight. The detention is tonight!" <br>

> Sirius stopped too. <br>

> " We can't afford to lose two months." <br>

> James walked back to them. <br>

> " I suppose two will have to go to sickbay and the other goes to the Restricted Section." <br>

> Sirius nodded. <br>

> " Yeah, and I'll give an excuse that you're not well, but doesn't have to come to sickbay, and you can take the Invisibility Cloak." <br>

> James held up his hands. <br>

> " Whoa! How come I'm the one who takes the risk?" <br>

> " It's your cloak fly boy." Said Remus. " Anyway, it's better than scrubbing bedpans." <br> Without another word Remus and Sirius strode away, chortling. James stared dumbstruck after them.

> <br>

><br> It was ten o'clock, and moonlight was streaming in through the windows. Remus, Sirius and James were strolling along the corridors towards sickbay when they reached the library doors.

><br> " Good luck." Whispered Remus, grinning.

><br> " Ah, go play with your bedpans." Grumbled James.

><br> The other two departed, laughing. James, muttering under his breath, reached under his robe and pulled out the Cloak. He threw it over himself and pushed the library door open. He took a deep breath and started towards the Restricted Section. Once there he pulled out a lantern and started to examine the row upon row of books.

Eventually, after about two hours, he found Animagi: A Study two shelves up. He glanced around and his eyes fell on a ladder. Pulling

it over, he scurried up and pulled the volume from its shelf. But in doing so, he dislodged another volume, one that looked to be covered in fungus. He recoiled instinctively, and the book slammed open on the floor. Harry held his breath for while, and when no one came, he breathed out and climbed down the ladder. But then the book started to shout shrilly.

>" HELP, HELP! THIEF! THIEF IN THE RESTRICTED SECTION. THIS IS DANGEREUSE FUNGI OF THE WORLD CALLING FOR HELP! THIEF!" <br>James yell out a yell of fear. He dived towards the door and rolled out, leaving the lantern burning and book shouting, his Animagi book clutched firmly under his arm. He had almost made it when Professor Fanges ugly head poked curiously around the doorframe, wand held firmly. The Slytherin Professor nimbly hopped into the doorway, wand lightly poised for action.

><br>" I can't see you but I can sense you." Fanges grey eyes searched every corner, every shadow.

><br>James tried to control his breathing. He was hunched behind a barrel against the wall. He had to get out, he had too. If Fange caught him, he could kiss goodbye to his Hogwart days. James shifted his foot slightly. It dislodged a book, propped against the wall. Fange, who had been advancing into the room, snapped round. James cursed under his breath. His wandering hand felt his wand, tucked into his belt. In a moment of madness he whipped it out, searching his able mind for a spell that could silence the Slytherin. One cropped into his mind, something Professor Flitwick had taught them last week. He knew to perform it on a teacher would mean instant expulsion, but what choice did he have? He checked the Invisibility Cloak was tight around him and stood up, wand held high. Fanges strange eyes snapped upwards. He raised his wand and started to shout a spell but James got there first.

><br>" EXPELLIARMUS!" he bellowed.

><br>BOOM!

>Professor Fange was hurled backwards, his wand flying into the Herbology section. But all this was lost on James, who was pelting towards the door as fast as he could. Fange staggered to his feet.

<br>

>" STOP!" he yelled. <br>

>No chance, snorted James under his breath, as he burst out into the freedom of the corridor. He pushed aside a tapestry and clambered into a secret tunnel he knew of. Dashing along it, he emerged nearer Gryffindor tower. He pounded up the stone steps, yelled ' Phoenix' at the Fat Lady and fell into Gryffindor Common Room. Sirius and Remus, who were waiting, leapt up. <br>

>" James, take the cloak off!" exclaimed Remus, at the sight of a foot hanging in mid air. The rest of James materialised as the cloak fell to the floor. He grinned at them both and flourished the book. They grinned back. <br>

>" Animagi." Breathed Sirius. <br>

>James turned towards the dormitory. <br>

>" Let the studies begin."<br>

><br>

End  
file.